

Rack Pack

in the Rack this issue!

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Welcome.....

Yes, another year is nearly over. As autumn approaches (or Q3 as our soulless bean counters insist on calling it), we naturally begin to reflect on the year that was and the year that will be. With three months still to go (and thank you High Street for at least waiting until September before filling aisles with selection boxes and tinsel), we are of the view that 2009 isn't proving as apocalyptic as predicted. It has certainly proved challenging but overall the tech industry has managed to keep its' end up. And we'd like to think that we've done, and continue to do, our bit for UK plc. In this edition we bring you news of our cloud services, introduce you to some wonderful clients, support people exposing their shortcomings, and offer you some sound pre Chrimbo advice from our friends at APICA.

So read and enjoy as you count down the days until you are unwrapping that 'Star Wars Darth Vader Laptop' that you've always coveted.



Cloud busting, lip smackin', bandwidth hungry, ace tasting, cold fusion, Hosting.....

iomart Hosting launches two cloud hosting platforms

We've announced our entry into the Cloud Hosting/ Computing market. We've launched two new 'cloud' services, one aimed at the 'Pay As You Go' on demand computing resources market and the other, utilising our own data centre infrastructure, a true High Availability offering.

-CloudXtra™ : allows access to iomart Hosting's cloud infrastructure on demand, where customers pay only for what they use, when they use it. This option is ideal for test, development and short-term or seasonal high-capacity requirements.

-CloudSure™ : utilising iomart Hosting's UK data centre network, CloudSure offers a bespoke and full-customisable cloud service. It enables integration of networking, server, storage, and application infrastructure into a single, virtual cloud-based architecture.

There are many definitions of cloud computing 'floating' around, but we're pretty clear on our own definition: We believe that Cloud Computing is the offering of a resilient, high availability 'infrastructure as a service' solution for organisations that offers economies and efficiencies of scale, at a reduced cost.

Commenting on the launch, Angus MacSween, CEO iomart Group plc, stated: "The benefits of cloud computing are hugely exciting but as yet are relatively untapped."

"We took a strategic decision to ensure we owned our data centre infrastructure and that strategy continues to prove its worth now with the advent of virtually-hosted cloud based data networks. With our two cloud hosting offerings, we are meeting the needs of two distinct markets. We are catering for both the company that needs to expand its current IT infrastructure on a short-term basis and also, the company that requires high availability for disaster recovery purposes. Many cloud providers offer resilience within one single data centre, with our network we can offer the 'cloud holy grail' of multi site redundancy.

"We believe we're the first in the UK to offer genuine cloud services. The beauty of our infrastructure set up is that we can adapt and develop that service across our data centres to ensure that, regardless of where our customers are, they can benefit from our cloud network."

For full details please visit:
www.iomarthosting.com/cloud-hosting



We don't sell DVDs, Hampers, Knitwear, Perfume, Books, Fruit Baskets, Insurance Policies, Lingerie, Hotel Rooms, Pens, Cakes, Paper, Wellington Boots, Christmas Cards, Staplers, Laptops, Calculators, Horoscopes, Bikinis, Mugs, Chocolates, Pianos, Mobile Phones, CDs, Magazine Subscriptions, Self Catering Apartments, Concert Tickets, Comics, Tyres, Stamps, Sports Memorabilia, Games, Watches, Cheese, Feather Dusters, Clocks, Nails, Handbags, Trainers, Erotica, Gift Wrap, Match Making, China, Towels, Ladders, Guitar Strings, Theatre Breaks, Team Building Days, Malt Whisky, Office Furniture, Light Fittings, Surf Boards, Blenders, Champagne, Digital Radios, Hats, Rail Tickets, Headphones, Postcards, Ring Tones, Coins, Trips to the Zoo, Footballs, Cinema Tickets, Cameras, Garden Sheds, Consultancy, Sofabeds, Vitamin Tablets, Cookery Classes, Bikes, Light Fittings, Televisions, Face Creams, Sunglasses, Ice Cream Makers, Photo Frames, MP3s, Golf Clubs, Romantic Meals, Flights, Aromatherapy Oils, Mortgages, Software, Qualifications, Broadband, Credit Cards, Antiques, Shower Pumps ...

...we sell peace of mind to the companies that do.

iomart is the natural hosting choice for online companies.



Call us now to discuss your hosting needs
Tel: 0800 040 7228 or
visit: www.iomarthosting.com

Load balancing is for life...not just for Christmas

Our friends APICA explain why we should be prepared for the seasonal online rush

Christmas and New Year might seem far off, but now is the right time to make sure that you get the most out of this year's holiday season.

This year E-tailers are expected to continue to increase their market share, but the seasonal peaks also raise serious challenges for these businesses to handle traffic surges and stay open.

We know that 4 seconds is how long the average online shopper waits before going to a competitor. You can de-risk that happening by building Best Practice load testing and performance monitoring into your development/test/production cycles.

- **Apica Loadtest™ will let you know your capacity limit and identify and remove performance bottlenecks.**

- **Apica WebPerformance™ will let you monitor your site's response times in real time and alert you if performance starts to deteriorate.**

The Apica WebExcellence™ suite is a combination of load testing tools to understand how the web site performs under increasing loads together with software to mimic how users actually use the website, which enables you to understand both limitations of the website capacity and reduce response times.

Apica load testing and web performance monitoring enable you to maximize existing IT investment, understand and manage capacity expansion, manage service level agreements and track how your website compares with your nearest competitors.

Most online businesses try to cope with Web platforms that constantly change. There are new features and functionality, dynamically changing content, back-end code re-writes, new applications, changing hardware architecture and hosting arrangements. These factors all pose a threat against the objective of sustained response times. If this situation sounds familiar, you should invest in a web performance management solution that lets you stay in control. Pricing for Load Testing starts at under £2000,



most of our assignments take less than 2 weeks from start to finish. A subscription for 24x7x365 Web performance Monitoring starts at less than £100 per month with a small set up fee .

Load testing and web performance monitoring no longer have to be expensive, cumbersome and human resource intensive. We can provide you with Best in Class products to help you manage your website performance so that customers have a great online experience and keep coming back for more!

'if you can't measure it you can't manage it'

For further information please visit:
www.apicasystem.com
 or call +44 (0) 1628 440826

Video Stars, UK Government & U-Bends

All reliant on iomart Hosting

Since the last edition of Rack Pack, we have been delighted that three of our clients have felt that the service they have received from us has deserved wider recognition, and they have assisted us with the production of a new series of case studies. Step forward **heatandplumb.com**, **Cimex** and **ChilliBean**... we salute and thank you.

Back in 2003 Austen Salton did not even own a computer. Today he runs **heatandplumb.com**, a heating and plumbing website that attracts 186,000 visitors a month, and turns over £4.8M, and after using 5 different web service providers, Austen has turned to iomart Hosting.

He says: "I cannot speak more highly of iomart hosting. They are the mustard! With previous providers we've spent up to three days in a queue to get help when our website has gone down. iomart Hosting provides us with our own dedicated server infrastructure, and someone at the end of the phone night and day to answer any queries we have. I seriously have never found such a good company."

Cimex currently develops and maintains digital services for the public sector, making sure its clients' websites are trusted sources of information for users while meeting official standards.

Its experience in the public sector is reinforced by the company's inclusion in many central government

rosters. Clients include the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), Department of Health (DH), Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the Gambling Commission, the National Lottery and the COI, the UK's largest advertiser.

Under the terms of the contract, iomart Hosting is initially providing Cimex with a fully-fledged Disaster Recovery (DR) solution, complete with multiple servers and firewalls for one of Cimex's key government clients. iomart Hosting will be using its own resilient network of 5 UK data centres to provide Cimex with a secure multi-site capability.

Mamun Ahmed, head of IT and systems at Cimex, said: "iomart Hosting are real facilitators. They don't just look at our clients' needs, they look at our needs too and provide us with a real and cost-effective solution. We are impressed."

Finally, London based **ChilliBean** was set up in 2005 and has quickly established a foothold in the digital media market. Its clients include some of the biggest names in global advertising, such as Sony and Saatchi & Saatchi, who trust it to manage and distribute their commercials to local agencies in key global territories. The local agencies then download and distribute the adverts across television, cinema and websites in country.

With so much data being sent back and forth across

the world, an average of 40 terabytes per month, ChilliBean required a data centre partner with proven experience coupled with a resilient and reliable infrastructure.

Ben Smith, ChilliBean's Chief Technical Officer, said: "We're really proud of the clients we have and to hang on to them we have to be able to continuously prove that their important data is safe with us. To physically handle the data we need solid foundations for our hosting purposes. We have that with iomart hosting – there are a lot of hosting companies out there but we immediately felt that we could trust iomart hosting."

He added: "When we met with iomart hosting they understood our world which is a great head start. We're moving such a lot of content around and we wanted our hosting partner to have a grasp of our business."

Praise indeed, but we're not resting on our laurels. We understand that no matter how we market the hosting services that we provide, we are simply selling peace of mind.

To read the case studies in full, please visit:
<http://www.iomarthosting.com/about-us/resources>



Getting yer kit off and drop everything! It's for Charity

iomart Hosting sponsors London Nude Tech Calendar 2010

We are delighted to announce that we're the main sponsors of the Nude London Tech Calendar 2010, the Calendar Girls style calendar that will feature the movers and shakers of the Capital's new media and technology community tastefully (we hope!) baring all for charity.

The calendar is the brainchild of technology writer, party planner and consultant, Milo Yiannopoulos and is set to become the 'must have wall candy' of the festive season.

The Nude London Tech Calendar will feature 12 volunteer men and 12 women from the London tech

scene, selected from a shortlist by a panel of industry luminaries. The finished calendar will be launched at an event on the 2nd November 2009, and all profits will be donated to Take Heart India, a youth-run charity focused on IT education projects in India for blind and disabled students.

Copies will be available to purchase mid November. A 'teaser' (what else would it be called?) video has been produced by Leap Anywhere TV and can be viewed on our web site: www.iomarthosting.com

Full details of the Calendar can be found at: <http://nudetechcalendar.ning.com/>



The Smooth Operators are back

Meet iomart Hosting at Ecommerce Expo



If you are planning to visit this month's eCommerce Expo - London Earl's Court 2 - then please ensure that you make a trip to the iomart hosting Stand 532. We would be delighted to meet you.

The show which is being held from Tuesday 20th October to Wednesday 21st is now in its third year and is designated **the** event for the e-commerce industry.

Access to the exhibition and conference is free

of charge so you can catch up with the the latest thinking and developments in e-commerce and meet the companies who can provide the solutions you're looking for. The speaker line up for the conference is already looking strong with senior personnel from companies including Ebay, Lastminute.com, Ministry of Sound, Hilton Hotels, Liberty PLC and House of Fraser already confirmed to speak.



Please drop by for the chance to chat to us about our new Cloud Hosting offerings plus all things Hosting. And of course, in keeping with our event tradition, we will be wheeling out the iomart Hosting Smoothie Bar again!! So if you're feeling in need of a pick me up, drop by and join us for a Fiery Firewall or a Blogberry!

Full details here: <http://www.ecommerceexpo.co.uk>

Stop Press: Just as we were going to print (well pdf stage) we were delighted to discover that we had been voted the UK's #1 Server Hosting company by Web Host Directory..which is nice....

an ordinary geographic number e.g. 0141 or 0207. Not only will calls to our new number be cheaper, but customers can also dial the 0370 number from abroad - making it easier to stay in contact with us.

Secondly, we have implemented an iomart Hosting Account Management Team. This team, headed up by Judy Henderson, is based out of our Headquarter building. The team's role is simply to provide our customers with a personal central point of contact, during normal business hours, for any queries that they might have about their hosting account, be it billing, support, pricing, contract renewal etc on a day to day basis. If you would like further information about the team please contact Judy direct at judy.henderson@iomart.com

Useful Contacts
Customer Support: 0370 757 5760
Support eMail: vipsupport@iomart.com
Judy Henderson judy.henderson@iomart.com

And it's goodnight from me....

Recent industry headlines that you might have missed....

EU hails US move to open up Internet governance
ICANN, YOUcANN, WECANN, now EVERYONECANN



The United States has announced it will give up its unilateral supervision powers over ICANN, the body responsible for managing Internet addresses worldwide. The move has been warmly welcomed by the EU and Web advocacy groups.

Like telephones, the Internet relies on numbers which identify computers and allow them to connect to one another. This identification process is coordinated at global level by ICANN, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers. ICANN was established as a not-for-profit corporation in 1998 with the backing of Washington. The agreement with the US administration has been renewed every three years up to the last renewal, signed in 2006.

ICANN is responsible for defining Internet domains, such as .com or .eu and for managing the Internet core directory. The EU and other countries around the world have acknowledged the success story of the US-born Internet, but have increasingly challenged the United States' sole control of Internet governance.

In a speech given last May, Information Society Commissioner Viviane Reding urged the Obama administration to embark on ambitious reform of Internet governance

Washington announced "its commitment to a multi-stakeholder, private sector-led, bottom-up policy development model for the domain name and addressing system (DNS)," according to a statement co-signed by the US Communication and Information Administration and ICANN, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers.

"A private coordinating process, the outcomes of which

Comfortable, stylish, uplifting support

A fine pair of initiatives designed to save our customers time and money

As part of our continuous Customer Service improvement program, we have introduced two initiatives designed to save our customers time and money.

Firstly we have replaced our 0870 customer service numbers with the new 0370 range. This enables our customers to call us at the same rates as a call to

reflect the public interest, is best able to flexibly meet the changing needs of the Internet and of Internet users," continues the statement.

In practical terms, this means that "the political responsibility of the Internet moves from the US to the global community," said ICANN's Massimiliano Minisci.

The move follows strong international pressure on the United States to loosen its control over ICANN. The European Commission has been very vocal in recent months in campaigning for an overhaul of Internet governance.

©EurActiv.com

Bing slips, Google inches ahead in search war

But can Google sing 'White Christmas'?



As the search wars continue, new numbers are in showing that Microsoft's Bing slipped while Google inched further ahead last month.

Google's search accounted for 71.08% of all U.S. searches conducted between September and October, said the Internet monitoring firm Hitwise. That's a 1% market share increase for Google, Hitwise reported at the beginning of October.

Google's latest search rival, Bing, didn't have as good a month, though. Unveiled in June, Bing slipped 5%, going from 9.48% in September to 8.96% of the market early in October. Holding in second place, Yahoo Search dropped 3%, going from 16.96% to 16.38%.

Fourth-place Ask.com, which hasn't shown up in much, if any, of the rivalry hoopla, showed the biggest increase. Ask.com rose from 2.37% to 2.56%, an 8% increase in share.

Hitwise's latest numbers are the second set of figures from an analyst firm noting that Bing took its first slip in September.

© Computerworld

Online banking fraud rises again

Consumers targeted at home as crooks realise that they have more money than banks

Card-not-present fraud - usually conducted over the phone or internet - fell 18 per cent to £134m in the six months to June 2009, from £163.9m in the previous six months, according to figures from Financial Fraud Action UK.

The group said the increasing use of sophisticated fraud detection tools by retailers and banks, as well as continuing growth in the use of authentication software such as MasterCard SecureCode and Verified by Visa by online retailers and cardholders have improved security.

But online banking fraud losses totalled £39m during the six months to June 2009 - a 55 per cent rise on the 2008 figure.

Katy Worobec, head of fraud control, said: "While industry online security initiatives such as Verified by Visa and MasterCard SecureCode may be making their presence felt, the fraudsters are never going to shut up shop and, of course, there are emerging areas such as online banking fraud which has risen again."

Worobec said the increase is largely due to criminals employing more sophisticated methods to target online banking customers through malware scams - which target vulnerabilities in customers' PCs - rather than the banks' own systems, which have proved more difficult for the fraudsters to attack.

There were more than 26,000 phishing incidents during

January to June 2009 - a 26 per cent increase on the amount seen in the same period last year.

©Tom Young Computing 2009

CIA endorses cloud computing

Awaiting Professor Robert Langdon's help with their Code



One of the U.S. government's strongest advocates of cloud computing is also one of its most secretive operations: the Central Intelligence Agency. But the CIA has adopted cloud computing in a big way, and the agency believes that the cloud approach makes IT environments more flexible and secure.

Jill Tummner Singer, the CIA's deputy CIO, says that she sees enormous benefits to a cloud approach. And while the CIA has been moving steadily to build a cloud-friendly infrastructure -- it has adopted virtualization, among other things -- cloud computing is still a relatively new idea among federal agencies.

"Cloud computing as a term really didn't hit our vocabulary until a year ago," said Singer.

Singer sees numerous benefits. For example, a cloud approach could bolster security, in part, because it entails the use of a standards-based environment that reduces complexity and allows faster deployment of patches. The CIA uses mostly Web-based applications and thin clients, reducing the need to administer and secure individual workstations. And it has virtualized storage, protecting itself "against a physical intruder that might be intent on taking your server or your equipment out of the data center," said Singer.

©Computerworld

12345 most popular stolen Hotmail password

Analysis reveals Hotmail users obviously can't spell 'Password'

The October phishing attack that exposed the details of 10,000 Hotmail attacks has revealed that 12345 was the most popular password of those caught out, according to a security researcher.

That's alarming news given the glut of information and warnings that pepper the internet, especially given the fact that the second most popular password was 123456789.

The information was revealed by security research Bogdan Calin on his blog. Calin reviewed the list of 10,000 Hotmail accounts posted on PasteBin by hackers and discovered that of the 9,843 valid passwords, 82 of them used one of these two numbers.

Also popular, and equally weak, were the passwords 12345678, 1234567 and 111111 - which all featured in the top ten.

The rest of the top ten was filled out with names such as alejandra, alberto, and alejandro, leading Calin to suspect that the phishing kit was targeting Latinos.

Another interesting fact to be pulled from his research was the longest password, which came in at a staggering 30 characters and was "lafaroleratropezoooooooooooooo". The shortest password, on the other hand, was only one character long.

In general, Calin found that the majority of the passwords were between six and nine characters long, with the average password eight characters in length.

Hotmail users weren't the only ones caught out by the phishers, with GMail, Yahoo and AOL also reporting that their users have been targeted.

© Stuart Turton PCPRO 2009

UN warns the next world war will be online

But still won't be as popular as World of Warcraft

The head of the UN International Telecommunications Union (ITU) told delegates at the ITU Telecom World 2009 conference (October) that the next big war will most likely be fought online.

Hamadou Touré said that countries are becoming increasingly dependent on the internet to control basic services, and that any future war could focus more on the online world, since such a battle would allow weaker adversaries to fight on a level playing field with larger powers.

"The next world war could happen in cyber space and that would be a catastrophe. We have to make sure that all countries understand that, in that war, there is no such thing as a superpower," Touré said, according to French news agency AFP.

"Loss of vital networks would quickly cripple any nation, and none is immune to cyber attack."

After examples of cyber attacks against Estonia and Georgia, governments are increasingly aware that they need to beef up their online defences. Nato has already started work on this, and the US Department of Homeland Security announced last week that it is looking to hire 1,000 new IT security specialists.

©Iain Thomson Computing 2009

Edwyn Collins banned from sharing his own songs

And this is a bad thing? How?

The music industry's crackdown on illegal-file sharing is hitting artists themselves, after Edwyn Collins was banned from uploading his own songs to MySpace.

Social-networking sites often use software to bar users from uploading copyrighted material, through fear of attracting the attention of record labels' legal departments.

However, the blanket ban has had the unfortunate side-effect of barring Collins from uploading his own hits. Collins's wife and manager, Grace Maxwell, was thwarted when she attempted to upload the star's hit, A Girl Like You, to his MySpace page - even though the Scottish singer owns the copyright to all his own music.

Maxwell was eventually told that Warner Bros were laying claim to the track. She claims to have spoken to a Warner lawyer, who promised to deal with the situation, but to no avail. Meanwhile, MySpace continues to refuse the track.

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